

John B. Lindale Farm
24 S. Main St.
Magnolia
Kent County
Delaware

HABS No. DE-172

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DEL,
1-MAG,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

MEASURED DRAWINGS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JOHN B. LINDALE FARM

HABS
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DE-172

Location: 24 South Main Street (U.S. A-113), approximately 1 mile south of its intersection with County Road 107, Magnolia, Kent County, Delaware.

USGS Frederica Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 18.458890.4324430.

Present Owners
and Occupants: Donn Edmund Jarrell and Shirley Huddleston Jarrell.

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: The Lindale House and its outbuildings are a rare surviving example of the entire complex of a Delaware peach farm. Built for John B. Lindale, who is often described as the last of the great peach "barons," it was one of the last of such complexes to be constructed. The house is a fine example of high Victorian architecture, built in the Queen Anne Revival style with some classical revival details around 1905. The architect was Charles G. Fisher; the builder is said to have been Samuel Minner.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1905. The records of the 8th Assessment District of Kent County show a sharp increase in the value of the residence of John B. Lindale between 1902 and 1907. In 1902 his residence was assessed at \$800 and in 1907 for \$4,000. Local legend says that John's mother, Mary Barnett, kept tight control of the family money until she died in 1903. The legend also contends that after his mother died John B. Lindale started to build his fine house and acquire other expensive items. The consensus of several elderly residents of the area was that the date of the house was around 1905.
2. Architect: Charles G. Fisher (1849-1912) is named as the architect in an undated copy of the specifications for the Lindale House. He was born in Milford, Delaware, on November 3, 1849, and served briefly in the artillery branch of the Union Army during the Civil War. He resigned to practice architectural drawing and design and lived in Washington, D.C., for several years. He eventually returned to Milford where he was a Justice of the Peace and architect.

The following is a list of buildings for which Charles G. Fisher made drawings for construction or remodeling. The information was abstracted from articles in The Milford Chronicle.

1903: Pierce & Carmean store annex in Milford, 3 story building, 31 ft. by 55 ft. "...The building will have an iron exterior and galvanized iron roof... has a construction for carrying with safety the heavy load of stoves or machinery...." The building contained about 5000 sq. ft. in additional floor space.

A new school in Milford. "...It will be composed of a center and a south wing...."

Printing and box-making plant for the Caulk Dental Supply Company of Milford. It is described as a stone building, 26 x 50 ft.

Warehouse for the Louis A. Levy Distillery in Dover. The building is described as having a capacity of 4000 barrels.

1905: Charles Fisher was commissioned to draw the plans to remodel the Capital Hotel in Dover.

He was also commissioned to remodel a hotel known as the Bayard House in Dover.

Two February, 1904, articles from The Milford Chronicle describe Charles Fisher's office as Justice of the Peace for the area. The article states that he was appointed by Governor Hunn and had moved his architectural work to his new office.

Charles Fisher is listed in an advertisement in the October 28, 1904, issue of The Milford Chronicle as the Secretary of the Milford Athletic Association.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

1903: April 21, letter of Administration, Will Book D2, page 193
Mary Barnett
to
John B. Lindale, her only heir

1937 Will, Book W2, page 437
John B. Lindale
to
Eliza Ann Lindale

1961 Will Book P3, page 406
Eliza Ann Lindale
to
Emily C. Lea, John L. Conner, Charles B. Conner

1963 September 28, Deed, Book 123, page 301
Charles B. Conner et al.
to
Down Edmund Jarrell et ux
1.542 acres, \$17,000

4. Builder: Samuel Minner is the builder of the Lindale House, according to: John L. Conner, a nephew of John B. Lindale; Frank Mosley, who grew up on the Lindale Farm; and Mrs. Jenny Dawson Minner, the daughter-in-law of Samuel Minner.
5. Original plans and construction: Mrs. Charles B. (Adele) Conner, 19 South State Street, Dover, Delaware, has an undated copy of the specifications for the Lindale House. A copy of these are included here in the field records.

B. Historical Events and Personages

John B. Lindale was the last of the great peach "barons" of this area. Articles in the Milford Chronicle during 1904-1905 note that he owned thousands of acres of land in sixteen farms in Kent and Sussex County. Local tradition says that Mr. Lindale owned a very fine pair of horses and one of the finest carriages in the area. An article in the Friday, May 27, 1904, issue of the Milford Chronicle states that "...He drove a pair of bays to Milford a few Saturdays ago that attracted nearly as much attention as a circus parade...." John B. Lindale, the son of John F. Lindale and Mary Conner, was born on December 5, 1864, near Magnolia. He married Eliza Ann Conner in 1886 and they remained life-long residents of the area. On April 24, 1937, he died of peritonitis.

Prepared by: James Stewart
Historian
Delaware Division of Historical
and Cultural Affairs
1975

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a fine example of Queen Anne Revival architecture with Classical Revival details, which with its outbuildings constitutes a working farm.

2. Condition of Fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all Dimensions: Approximately 41'-6" x 54'-6" with a polygonal tower on the two sides, two-and-a-half stories, irregular plan.
2. Foundation: Brick, notched at angle intersections on towers. Wood lattice openings to crawl spaces under porches.
3. Walls: Cypress clapboards painted white with fish-scale shingles on dormers, towers, and gables. The bases of the towers, above the foundations, have panels with diagonal planks. Above the first- and second-floor windows in the tower are panels with swags and garlands.
4. Structural system, framing: Wood frame construction.
5. Porches: A large porch across the front wraps around to each side. Part of the porch on the west front had screening in 1975 which was removed by 1982. There are three sets of steps to this porch, with heavy newel posts and turned balusters. There are porches on each side of the rear wing, a part of the north porch having been made into a closet and the south porch screened. All porches have tapered fluted columns, a large turned balustrade and a modillioned cornice. Porches have a wood floor painted gray and a wood ceiling, painted light blue.

There is a brick bulkhead with metal-covered doors on the south side leading to the cellar. A simple set of wooden steps leads from the summer kitchen on the rear.

6. Chimneys: There is a brick chimney near the center of the house and on the gable end of the rear wing. A brick chimney with a clay-tile pot is on the summer kitchen rear gable.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance on the west front has a large, full-length pane of oval, beveled glass in a wooden frame. Other entrances on the west front have doors with rectangular, beveled glass and applied decorative trim. There is a wood panel side door on the rear porches on the north and south sides.
 - b. Windows and shutters: All windows were one-over-one-light single-hung sash, with the upper sash having leaded, diamond-pattern glass. Some of these have been replaced with single-light glass panels. On the first floor there

are some paneled wood exterior shutters and on the second floor adjustable louvered shutters. The windows in the towers and in the front bay have combination louvered and solid shutters on the interior. The windows in the third floor of the towers and the gable window on the west front are round-arched. There are two windows in the stairway in the southwest corner of the house that have colored, leaded glass in a diamond pattern. The summer kitchen has six-over-six-light sashes. Windows in the cellar are simple hinged sashes.

- 8 a. Shape, covering: The main roof is intersecting gables terminating at a railed deck. The covering is decorative patterned slate shingles with metal ridge caps. The railed deck is mineral surface roll roofing. There is a metal finial on each gable end, and decorative lightning rods with glass balls on the roof. The porches have shed roofs with metal covering that has been tarred over and painted silver.
- b. Cornices, eaves: The modillioned cornice has a crown molding between modillions as well as above. There is a plain frieze band below the dentils.
- c. Dormers, towers: There are two hipped-roof dormers, one on the west front and one on the north side, each topped with a finial. Octagonal towers on each side of the main house have pyramidal roofs topped by metal finials terminating in pineapples. Both dormers and towers are covered with patterned slate shingles.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The concrete-floored basement under the center portion of the house contains the furnace and oil tank.
- b. First floor: This is generally a four-room plan, with a parlor in the polygonal bay in front, towers off the dining and living rooms, and the kitchen behind. The entrance hall is in the southwest corner of the house and a two-room summer kitchen, accessible only from the exterior, is off the rear.
- c. Second floor: The second floor maintains the basic four-room plan although a hall runs through the center of the house. The bathroom is located just behind the front bedroom.

d. Attic: The attic is floored but otherwise unfinished.

2. Stairway: The main stairway, located in the entrance hall in the southwest corner of the house, is an open-well, closed-string stairway with two landings. The balustrade with molded handrail runs from a large newel at the first floor to a newel at each landing, ending at a newel on the second floor and curving around the opening on the second floor, terminating with a half- newel at the wall. The newels at the landings and second floor project down below the ceiling. There is a large knob on the top of each newel, the one at the first floor being more ornate than the intermediate newels.

The stairway in the dining room provides access to the basement and attic as well as to the second floor. At the first leading up, it is an enclosed stair beginning as a winder and straightening out. It has a simple wall handrail. The stair to the cellar is an open-string with a simple wood handrail on one side.

The stairway in the kitchen is a very steep winding stairway with no handrail, leading to the second floor. There is a balustrade at the top of the opening.

3. Flooring: The rooms on the first floor have carpeting and vinyl tile over hardwood. The second floor has pine flooring, with rugs.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceilings are all wallpapered. The wallpaper in the dining room is probably the original. Walls and ceiling in the summer kitchen are horizontal beaded-wood paneling. A modern wood panel wainscot has been added in the kitchen.
5. Doorways and doors: Paneled wooden doors have pilaster trim with carved corner blocks. There are sliding doors between the stair hall and the living room and between the stair hall and the parlor. Interior doors are all unpainted chestnut except those in the kitchen.
6. Decorative features: The interior woodwork is all chestnut window trim has carved corner blocks. The windows in the towers and on the bay fronts, first and second floors, have divided wooden shutters, a combination of adjustable louvers and solid panels. There are wooden mantels in the living room, kitchen and one bedroom on the second floor, but no fireplaces.
7. Hardware: The original hardware is on all doors. The original hand doorbell is at the main entrance, installed in the trim and not on the door.

8. Mechanical equipment:

- a. Heating: The house is heated with the original steam radiators in each room. There is a flue opening in the kitchen and bedroom above.
- b. Lighting: There is a large Tiffany-style lighting fixture hanging over the dining table that is probably original. A hanging fixture in the first-floor stair hall with pulleys for a pull-down globe is perhaps an original fixture. The bedrooms and bath each have one single hanging fixture that is also probably original. Some modern fixtures have been added.
- c. Plumbing: There is a porcelain, Grecian pedestal lavatory in the bathroom, and a roll rim porcelain tub with claw feet. A silver metal combination soap, toothbrush and glass holder is also probably original.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces west on the east side of the street, in the midst of outbuildings and large houses. There are numerous large houses across the street.
2. Landscape: The house is surrounded by numerous large trees and shrubs. A wire fence with cast-iron decorative trim on top surrounds the site on three sides. There are a number of large clay flower pots on pedestals around the site. An iron pipe rail with concrete posts lines the drive to the carriage house and in front of the outbuildings. There is a sidewalk from each side of the house with a concrete step for mounting a horse.
3. Outbuildings: The outbuildings, extending southeast of the house in an almost straight line, are painted yellow with green trim. The last three outbuildings were originally part of the complex but have since been sold off.
 - a. Privy: Directly behind the house, the privy is in poor condition with clapboard siding and a wood-shingled roof.
 - b. Chicken house: Vertical plank siding, ribbed metal roof.
 - c. Office: Small wood frame building in fair condition. Set on brick piers. Clapboard siding, paneled wood shutters, one-over-one-light windows. Large sign on front "John B. Lindale, Magnolia, Del." Gable roof, ribbed metal roofing, decorative weather vane with clear glass ball, red glass tail on the arrow missing since 1975. Fish-scale shingles in gable, barge trim. The interior, divided into two rooms, has beaded wood paneling on walls and ceiling and a wood floor. The front room is used as a tool shed.

- d. Water tower: Three floors, vertical wood planks, heavy timber construction. Pent roof between second and third floors and hipped roof on top have wood shingles. Concrete foundation. Stairway leads to second level and a scuttle to the third. Water tank is on third level.
- e. Barn: Vertical plank siding, slate gable roof. Stalls on the ground level, hay loft on second. Open shed across front has corrugated metal roof supported by posts with pipe railing in between. At the rear of the barn is an open front shed with metal roof and wood siding. Detached from the end of this shed is a gable end, remains of a building that had been torn down.
- f. Corn cribs: Behind water tower. Two wooden corn cribs, metal roofs, wood floors.
- g. Well house: In front of barn. Wood frame with clapboard siding, paneled shutters on one-over-one-light windows. Modillioned cornice. Intersecting gable roof, fish-scale shingles in gables, same barge trim as on office. Between well house and barn is an iron water tower over a well, with a large concrete water trough beside.
- h. Small barn: Joined to large barn by covered passageway. Board-and-batten siding, metal gable roof. Two floors and loft, with three concrete stalls and dirt floor. Long open shed, partially enclosed, to rear of small barn.
- i. Shop: Three floors, clapboard siding, gable metal roof, brick chimney. First floor: wooden walls, plaster ceiling, wooden floor. Second floor: wooden floor, plaster walls and ceiling, horizontal plank wainscot. Wooden stair, no handrail. Attic not floored, reached by scuttle over stair.
- j. Carriage house: Vertical plank siding, gable roof of corrugated and ribbed metal. Dirt floor, hay loft above.
- k. Garage: Clapboard siding, paneled wood shutters, modillioned cornice. Gable roof of ribbed metal, decorative shingles in gable, same barge trim as on office and well house.
- l. Tenant house now owned by Wilbert Coverdale: Two stories, one-story wing on rear, one-story porch across front. White aluminum siding, red wood shutters, ribbed metal gable roof. Wood shed behind house.
- m. Tenant house now owned by Harry Freese: One-and-a-half stories, lean-to addition in rear, modern addition on south. Gold clapboard siding, decorative barge board and eave board. Ribbed metal gable roof tarred over, brick chimney.

- n. Store now owned by Harry Freese: Formerly the peach warehouse. Two-and-a-half stories, concrete foundation, heavy timber construction, vertical wood siding. Large overhead doors on front and rear and numerous windows on all sides.

Prepared by: John P. White
Project Supervisor
Historic American Buildings Survey
July, 1975

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Primary and Unpublished Sources:

1. Deed Books: Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Kent County Court House.
2. Wills: Office of the Register of Wills, Kent County Court House.
3. Assessment Books: Delaware Archives, Hall of Records, Dover, Delaware.
4. Maps: Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Kent County Court House.
5. Death Certificates: Bureau of Vital Statistics, Dover, Delaware.
6. Interviews: All are of the Magnolia area unless noted otherwise. Adele (Mrs. Charles B.) Conner of Dover; John L. Conner; Edna Davis; Virginia Fisher of Milford; Ella Gurley; Jennifer Jackson; Shirley Jarrell; Judge James L. Latchum of Wilmington; James McIlvaine, whose grandparents lived across the street from the Lindale House; Jenny Dawson Minner, daughter-in-law of Samuel Minner; Fred Mosely, Jr., who was born and raised on the Lindale farm, and whose grandmother worked for the Lindales; Mrs. N. H. Warren, whose husband worked for the Lindale family.

B. Secondary Sources:

Biographical and Genealogical History of the State of Delaware. 2 vols. Chambersburg, PA.: J.M. Runk and Co., 1899.

The Delaware Republican. Microfilm, Delaware Archives, Hall of Records, Dover, Delaware.

John B. Lindale's obituary: April 30, 1937.

The Milford Chronicle. Milford, Delaware.

Charles Fisher's obituary: November 29, 1912.

The Symrna Times. Microfilm, Delaware Archives, Hall of Records, Dover, Delaware.

The State Sentinel. Microfilm, Delaware Archives, Hall of Records,
Dover, Delaware.

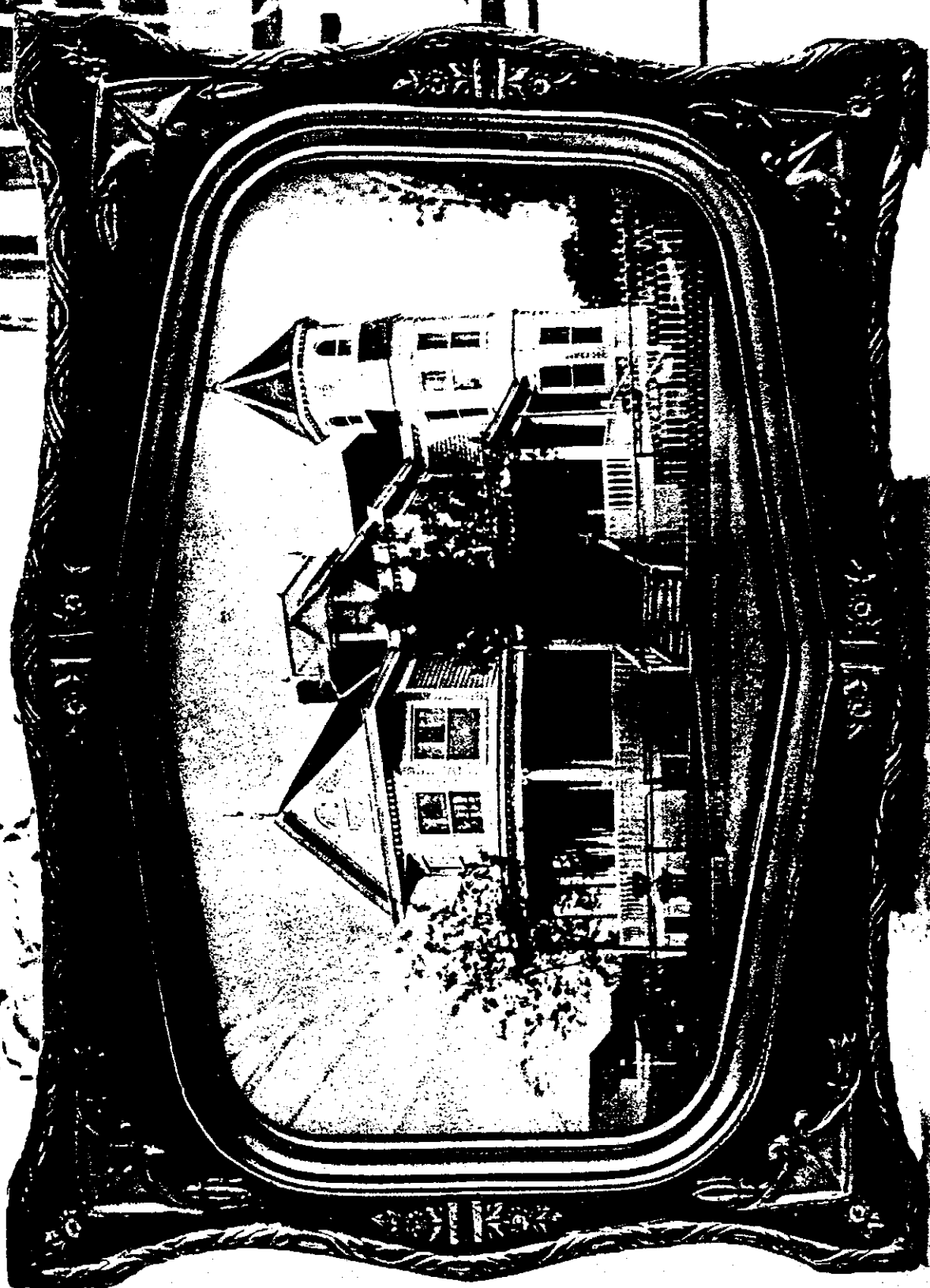
John B. Lindale's obituary: April 30, 1937.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, State of Delaware, and was financed with funds provided by the State of Delaware. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1975 at the Historic American Buildings Survey Field Office, Dover, Delaware, by John P. White (Assistant Professor, Texas Tech University), Project Supervisor; James Stewart (University of Delaware), Sally Schwartz (Harvard University), Project Historians; Charles B. Tonetti (Syracuse University), Architect; Student Assistant Architects, Scott Barnard (University of Pennsylvania), Frederick K. Read (University of Notre Dame), and Mark T. Wellen (Texas Tech University). The written data were edited by Alison K. Hoagland, Historian, in the HABS office in January, 1983.



Photograph of John B. Lindale from the collection of Mrs. Charles B. (Adele) Conner of Dover. Negative of photocopy in collection of Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, Dover.



Photograph of Lindale House in early twentieth century.
Photocopy by Graydon Wood, August, 1972. Negative of
photocopy in collection of Division of Historical and

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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